El Centro opened the fall semester of 1966 with all the essential elements in place and an enrollment of 4,047 students. That was 2,047 more than had been projected. It was a success. That October, Priest marked one year with the Dallas County Community College District. Thornton asked Priest how much he wanted for a raise. Priest thanked him for the offer and vote of confidence it implied, but he told Thornton he thought it was premature. Priest explained that the first year of operation and continuing progress in the development of the college district would be the true indicator of his deserving a raise. Priest “walked his talk” and expected to be evaluated and held to the same standards by his supervisors that he used in the evaluation of those who reported to him. He had asked for a healthy salary and benefits package when he was hired, but it was one he believed to be fair to himself and to the budget of the new college district. In October of 1967, Thornton again approached Priest with the question of the amount of a raise. The year had been successful; El Centro’s enrollment was growing and plans were moving forward for the other colleges. Priest asked for ten-thousand-dollars and the Board of Trustees agreed.
The plans for the other six colleges included selecting the sites. The general area for each college had been charted in the earliest planning stages. Names for all seven colleges were decided at that time as well. The board was besieged with proposals from groups all over Dallas County. Several factors were considered in choosing the land and locations for each campus. Not the least of these was Priest’s promise to the North Dallas Chamber of Commerce that every citizen in Dallas County would be no farther than twenty minutes away from a Dallas County Junior College campus. With the traffic levels in the late sixties, that was feasible. The committee operated under the profoundly simple principle that in the purchase of land with taxpayer money, you have to get it right the first time. That meant focusing on quality and accessibility with an eye on the future.

Although the founding of the college district was a response to immediate needs, Priest knew he was planning for future generations. Priest and the board toured existing college campuses all over the country to get ideas. They would gather the best concepts for implementation and modification in formulating their own plans. The mistakes in land selection and construction made by other colleges also benefited them by teaching them what to avoid. At this time, all community and junior colleges were growing, but most had no land on which to expand. Some of the colleges had made frugal purchases to get started. Others had initially purchased more land than they needed, but subsequently sold it. They could not respond to the enrollment growth by building new buildings because they lacked the land. The Dallas County Junior College Board of Trustees made a commitment to buy no less than two-hundred acres per campus and not to sell any of the land. They knew that there would be a continued increase in enrollment at the colleges for many years to come because of the unique niche they filled in higher education and because the population of Dallas County was destined to grow.

Adequate parking also called for large land purchases. Community colleges with rare exception were commuter colleges. In 1966, an article by R. Lynes in Harper’s Magazine stressed that a
new junior college could operate with a minimal library and inadequate classrooms, but a parking lot was essential. The plan to scatter the campuses throughout Dallas County guaranteed they would not be served by public transportation. The city of Dallas had a transit system at the time, but it did not serve the outlying areas. As buildings were added, parking space would have to follow. It was a farsighted decision to make each college campus no less than two-hundred acres regardless of the expectations of initial enrollments. Priest and the board also decided the parking should be free without reserved spaces for faculty, administrators or staff. Priest believed in an egalitarian parking system. It was a message to students that they were important.⁶

The only inequity in parking arrangements existed at El Centro College. While it was accessible by public transportation, those who drove a car had to pay for parking in a commercial lot. This was true for employees and students alike. There was no land to purchase in downtown Dallas for a parking lot. The land that was acquired as part of the Sanger’s package was designated for buildings. This inequity existed until 1988, when the Board of Trustees voted to give monthly stipends for parking to the employees at El Centro to compensate for the additional expense they incurred for parking at the downtown campus.⁷

Parking was a major consideration in the building of the other six campuses. Eastfield and Mountain View were the next two colleges planned and built. Eastfield’s 244 acre site is in Mesquite which is in east Dallas County, and Mountain View’s two-hundred acre site is in Oak Cliff in the southwest sector. Oak Cliff is physically part of the city of Dallas, but began as a small town, Hord’s Ridge, and was annexed to the city in 1904.⁸ Mesquite is a separate municipality adjacent to the city of Dallas. Deon Holt was in charge of the oversight of planning and construction of the new campuses. An Educational Facilities Lab funded by the Ford Foundation made it possible to bring in a consultant, Harold Gore. Frank Schroeter, another consultant, who was a retired planning and development officer from California, was also brought to Dallas. A generous budget allowed the board and staff members to travel to campuses
with state-of-the-art designs to inspire innovative thinking. Priest and the board wanted campuses that were distinctive and did not look like replicas of a central office or secondary schools. They also drew from the architectural designs of the newest structures around Dallas. Schroeter saw great potential for a college campus in the layout of Northpark shopping center in north Dallas. It was his observation that a college could function more efficiently housed in a continuous structure that would give a sense of community to all the various departments and services. It would make them more accessible to students than the university model where each program was housed in a separate building. The networked structure would also include the food service area and the bookstore. Like the shopping center, the parking lot would encircle the buildings. Students could park, walk up to the closest entrance, and not have to return outside until the close of their academic day.

Mountain View was built on this model, but unlike a shopping mall, there are large windows in some of the halls and the group areas. Student lounges look out on rustic scenes of trees, the diminutive canyon-like rocky landscape, and a creek. Even today on campus, there is a sense of being far from a populated area.

Priest was a believer in innovative but practical use of space. Trustee Margaret McDermott, a respected patron of the arts, stressed aesthetics. The whole board desired unique and excellent campuses. These formed a synergy of creativity and cutting edge designs. Priest saw the value of aesthetics beyond that of being visually pleasing. He saw it as a very subtle but powerful marketing tool of image. He explained, “Cosmetics influence the external public. It seduces them to come see what you have, but then you must have substance behind those pretty walls.”

He also strongly believed that the structure should represent the community. It was his goal to have the designs inspire pride. “People driving by the place will say, ‘Here is an establishment that makes our community a better place,’” were Priest’s words in a Dallas Morning News article in May, 1966.

The planning climate set by Priest did not allow beauty bereft of educational purpose. It incorporated the concept that form
such traffic flow could be disruptive, so all the halls were carpeted to alleviate this problem.¹⁴

Eastfield was built simultaneously with Mountain View in order to broaden the service area more quickly. The parking lots at Eastfield encircled the buildings, but they were not connected in a continuous flow like a shopping mall. The campus was built in an area with established residential dwellings on one side and commercially zoned property on the other. It was imperative that the college be distinctive to these structures and visible from the freeway on the east side of the campus. The individual buildings with their one-sided slanted roof lines were clustered around a large meandering courtyard and when viewed at a distance gave the illusion of one large castle-like configuration.¹⁵

Both colleges were scheduled to open the fall of 1970. Priest, Holt, and the board had been meticulous in all of the planning, but in the words of poet Robert Burns “The best laid schemes o’ mice an’ men . . . .” In May of 1970, the Building Trades Union went on strike. No amount of negotiation from college personnel made any headway. This was a union-called strike and the brick layers had to support the union. Priest was a man of action and not afraid of tainting his image. He was more concerned with getting the colleges completed and opened on time. He went to the union hall and talked with the officers of the union. He drew on the vernacular of his days working with his brother-in-law as a stevedore in the shipping yards. He hit the union officers with a barrage of profanity ending with the point that it was “goddamn stupid of you to prevent us from building colleges to educate your kids.”¹⁶ He spoke their language, lifted a barrier, and they listened. They seemed to think this educator was an all right guy and that no one had really explained the situation to them before. They agreed to complete the work at Eastfield and Mountain View, but it was not
to be public knowledge. The strike continued at other construction sites. Then just one week before the two campuses were to open, striking carpet workers encircled each campus with picket signs. Both colleges opened on schedule albeit with tents and temporary buildings at Mountain View.\textsuperscript{17}

With each new campus, a review of possible technical programs occurred and those decisions had to be made prior to drawing the blueprints for construction. Those early interviews of business and industry leaders had revealed a need for welding and automobile mechanics. Neither program was appropriate for a downtown high-rise such as El Centro. To respond to the business communities needs as soon as possible, the two programs were placed at the next two campuses. Eastfield offered the auto mechanics program, as well as auto body repair, and Mountain View offered welding. The opening of each college was a success. That fall, the combined enrollments of El Centro, Mountain View, and Eastfield was 13,573 in credit classes and an additional six-thousand in non credit classes.\textsuperscript{18}

The need was apparent for the fourth campus. Plans were being implemented for Richland College with a targeted opening date of fall 1972. Richland was located on 243 acres on the outer perimeter of Dallas at the southern edge of Richardson, a small suburban town in far north Dallas County. Richardson Independent School District had already considered opening a junior college so the opening of the newest college of the Dallas Junior College system was highly anticipated. Again the parking lot encircled the college buildings; however, most were built more similarly to the university model of a collection of stand alone buildings. This return to an older style campus layout was motivated by the aesthetic goal of taking advantage of the natural landscape. A bridge connects the two sections of the campus that are split by an elongated pond. This simple approach to capitalizing on the terrain precipitated many elements that became part of the culture of the campus. The employee newsletter is titled *The Bridge* and the ducks that inhabited the pond inspired the mascot, Thunder Ducks.\textsuperscript{19} When Richland’s doors opened to its first students in the fall of 1972, the district enrollment soared. The number rose
again when, a month later, the first students enrolled in telecourses offered by the Dallas district.  

It was far from the first college to use television as a vehicle for delivery of credit classes, but the Dallas district quickly became one of the best. Educational television programs were part of the early experiments of broadcasting as early as 1933 when the medium itself was an evolving experiment. In the early fifties, Southern Methodist University televised a credit course on KRLD, the CBS affiliate at the time, but it was short lived. About the same time that Dallas was developing televised courses, Miami Dade in Florida built a full production center, however, after a couple of years it had produced only one course.  

When Priest first experimented with instructional television in Sacramento he learned what components were problematic and what production was needed to make it successful. One of the hindrances was lack of funding. Dallas had the budget to support the venture. Even with an adequate budget, seeding the telecourse project with one-half to one million dollars of risk capital took courage. Priest never shied from taking risks and encouraged responsible risk-taking from everyone who worked for him. Motivation for taking the risk, outside the basic goal of innovative approaches to delivering education and reaching new students, were the facts that the demand for classes was out pacing what could be offered on the existing campuses, and telecourses would reach currently un-served students.  

Priest had fought the reimbursement battle with the state of California. The state thought reimbursement for students who never came to campus was unethical. Priest thought Texas was fertile ground for taking education to the airwaves and well worth the tussles with the educational governing bodies of the state. The DCCCD board liked and supported the idea. On September 11, 1972, the first Dallas district telecourse, Government 201, was broadcast over KERA, Channel 13, the public broadcast affiliate in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.  

The role of supervising instructional television was part of the duties of the assistant to the chancellor. The first director of
instructional television in that combined position was Travis Linn, former director at television station WFAA, the ABC affiliate in Dallas. He brought the knowledge of the broadcast industry and moved the program forward until he resigned in 1976. Linn had a background more appropriate for Instructional Television than the educational aspect of assistant to a college district chancellor. Placing such an important and innovative aspect of instruction under the supervision of anyone other than the academic vice-chancellor seemed perhaps inappropriate. Priest had the function report directly to him to protect it. According to Priest, as a direct report to him, it was less likely to “suffer the pot shots from critics who would kill it prematurely.” His plan was that once it was solidly established as a credible means of instruction, he would move it to the vice-chancellor, who at that time was R. Jan LeCroy, for further development and growth.

Indeed, telecourses had critics, most specifically faculty who were fearful of loss of academic integrity. The concern was genuine, and in keeping with the Priest’s own desire for quality in every aspect of the district, two separate studies were conducted on two separate telecourses: a business course and a writing course. The findings in each set of data indicated higher performance and achievement by the telecourse students than the classroom students.

From the first course produced in the Learning Resource Center at Richland College in 1972, the telecourse division quickly grew to a staff of seven by 1974. In 1975, it moved to portable buildings. By 1976, with eleven courses having been completed and others in production, the Instructional Television Division (ITV) was one of the country’s two major producers of quality television courses and the division was under the supervision of the academic vice-chancellor.

The year of 1972 was momentous for the Dallas County Junior College District. Richland College opened, the first telecourse was broadcast, and an additional eighty-five million dollars in bonds were sold. Also, earlier that year, the district officially changed its name to Dallas County Community College District. Every component of the Dallas district reflected the community college
mission, except the name. While Priest and the board were on the cutting edge in facilities, curriculum, and services, they did not lead the way with the name change.

In the early fifties Jesse Bogue, the executive secretary of the American Association of Junior Colleges from 1946 to 1958, wrote a landmark book called *The Community College*. “Community” was added to the name of the association making it the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges during the tenure of Bogue’s successor, Ed Gleazer. When Gleazer took the helm of the association, the position was changed to executive director and later president. Gleazer wrote extensively about the broader mission of the community college beyond offering post-secondary education. The use of the term community college began to spread. In 1963, the state of Florida, while keeping the two-year colleges part of the public school system, began using the term “community junior college.”

Priest never preferred the use of the word “junior” as a descriptor of the two-year college, but it was historically associated and changing it would take more than his opinion.

The philosophy that led the Dallas Board of Trustees to establish a multi-college district was the catalyst that led to the name change which occurred by unanimous vote in January, 1972. Priest was using the term “community college” in 1962 with an expectation that two-year colleges should operate as an integral part of the community their colleges served. This brought a responsibility of providing entertainment and cultural events in addition to an array of courses.

In Dallas, Priest had established all of the elements that distinguished the comprehensive community college from the junior college. The focus was on providing a multiplicity of services and supports for a student body diverse in ethnicity, age, and preparedness, to make them successful in whatever educational endeavor they pursued. Priest and the Board of Trustees realized that whether a student completed academic core courses for transfer to a university, a technical/vocational associate degree, or a non credit course to up-date skills, that education would make them marketable in the workplace. The ultimate outcome would
be economic growth for the area with improved quality of life for its residents. The district served all of Dallas County, but it did so through its individual colleges. Each college served a distinct community with specific needs. The name change gave the district a verbal visage of commitment to all the people of Dallas County.30

The reputation of the Dallas County Community College District was already one of a national model. Just as in its beginning Priest and the board members took tours of the most innovative two-year colleges of the time, the DCCCD colleges were now the destination points of tours by many new and growing colleges. In 1974, Dale Parnell, chancellor of San Diego Community College District, brought the Board of Trustees to look at the Dallas system. The San Diego district had opened in 1969, and Parnell and his board came to gather ideas from the DCCCD. A main goal was to study and implement the DCCCD governance model. It was a compliment to Priest and the DCCCD Board of Trustees to have the chancellor and board of a large metropolitan community college district view them and their district as the model. Parnell was a man who knew and understood the comprehensive community college’s relevance to the higher education system in the United States. He was selected to succeed Gleazer as president of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges when Gleazer retired in 1981. Under Parnell’s leadership, the word “junior” was dropped from the association’s name to reflect the growing national trend. Priest had anticipated that community colleges were the wave of the future and the wave was at high tide.31

The DCCCD had two more colleges ready to begin construction and one more on the drawing board. Although the building schedule was an ambitious one, it did not keep pace with student numbers. By 1975, the combined credit enrollment of El Centro, Mountain View, Eastfield, Richland, and telecourses was thirty-four-thousand.32 The following year, the district had projected and budgeted for a five percent increase in enrollment. They received a nineteen percent increase bringing the total to over forty-thousand. That would have been even more, but they were forced to run public service announcements on the radio and send press
releases to the newspapers stating that the campuses were full. Approximately three-thousand students were turned away.\textsuperscript{33}

Having to turn away three-thousand students might be termed a “good problem,” but it was unacceptable to Priest. This was doubly painful for Priest because he and the board had anticipated the need for additional space and planned to raze a portion of the structure housing El Centro to construct a new facility that would increase the usable square footage. The Sanger Brother’s building was actually a composite of two buildings constructed at separate times. The district’s plan was placed on hold while they battled with the Dallas Historic Preservation League and the Texas Antiquities Commission over the historical value of the Sanger Brothers’ buildings. These two organizations wanted to preserve the buildings.\textsuperscript{34} Architects lined up on both sides. Expert opinions were mixed on the feasibility of restoration to salvage the buildings versus razing them and constructing new buildings. The DCCCD had conducted a study that revealed the buildings, while externally representative of the nineteenth century business architecture, had been quickly and cheaply constructed, not intended for long term use. On personal inspection, Priest found there were parts of the building where the stone flaked off in his hand. The eighteen-month brouhaha went all the way to the Texas Supreme Court and cost the district 1.9 million dollars in unused construction contracts and litigation.\textsuperscript{35} The loss was so high because the two historic preservation groups had not been timely in their protests and contracts had already been negotiated and signed for the demolition of the old buildings and construction of the new structure.\textsuperscript{36}

The end result was the salvaging of the external shell of the nine-story building. Eight stories had been built in 1884. The ninth floor had been added by the DCCCD to house district offices. The original structure was and is an example of the Richardsonian architectural influence and by all counts the most historically significant of the three separately constructed phases of the facility.\textsuperscript{37} Even though the district had ample resources, the loss of nearly two million dollars was significant, and in hindsight, there was a
question of whether or not partial victory was worth the loss in time and money. Analysis of the evidence does not provide a clear answer. Steve Mittlestet was working as Priest’s assistant at that time. In an interview in 1994, he reflected, “While it is good to be part of preserving some of the history of downtown Dallas, because there is so little of that, the building has never been at the level it needed to be to serve the students of El Centro.”

Linda Timmerman was Priest’s secretary in 1976. In an interview in 2002, she remembered that she had never seen Priest as angry and frustrated as he was during that litigious process. It is still a sore spot with him. The solution would have been for the district to have acted faster and to have had the building razed before the Dallas Historic Preservation League and the Texas Antiquities Commission could have intervened with legal action. At the end of the legal proceedings, all of the construction contracts had to be renegotiated. The cost of construction materials had escalated.

Years of use by frustrated students and faculty proved Priest to be right, that the structure was inadequate for the growing needs of the college and was functionally inadequate. Modern additions have been added next to the old Sanger Brothers’ building. The historical building’s shell remains intact, but the internal structure has been renovated many times. When El Centro first opened, long time residents and patrons of Sanger Brothers Department Store could easily visualize where the jewelry counter had been or where the notions department used to be. Now it takes viewing the building from afar to recall its department store days. Inside, it is clearly a community college, designed to serve students.

For all the rancor of that year-and-a-half struggle, 1976 was not without its positives. That year, Priest was named to the Athletic Hall of Fame in Stockton, California. It gave him the opportunity to travel back to the place of his childhood and see old friends. The following year, Priest received one of the highest honors of his career. The American Association of College Baseball Coaches inducted him into the Hall of Fame for former baseball players who rise to the top of their chosen career field. The plaque reads, “Bill Priest whose career achievement reflects the ideals that sports
exemplify.” This recognition carried with it double significance. It validated his baseball career and credited him with moving beyond to greater success. After all, it could be said that he hit a grand slam in higher education.

Not every decision made by Priest and the DCCCD board was met with full acceptance by faculty and staff. In 1976, a decision for an organizational change was made based on practicality. The division chair position was a nine-month faculty position, which meant there was no one in that office during the summer unless the chair was given a summer contract at formula pay, meaning a percentage of the nine-month salary. Logic indicated the job was clearly a twelve-month job and one annual administrative contract cost less than a nine-month faculty contract plus one or two summer contracts. This change created a controversy among district employees, especially faculty. Those faculty members in the chair positions were given a choice of changing to administration or returning to teaching. Most saw it as a pay cut and demotion, and chose to return to teaching. Other faculty members believed it diminished faculty voice in governance because a faculty division chair was more able to support faculty and instruction than an administrator in that role. Stan Fulton, an instructor at Mountain View College, disagreed with Priest’s decision but supported him as a leader. He recalled, “Unfortunately, the faculty in those division chair jobs became a little too greedy and kept demanding more money and extra service contracts, and so, like the consummate autocrat, he was not satisfied with simply telling them no. He had to kick their collective ass with this solution.” Fulton went on to explain that Priest was not a liar and that the faculty always knew the real reasons behind decisions. That elicits respect even if not agreement. Fulton summed up his opinion by describing Priest as “a tough, smart, brutally honest, fair and upfront old bastard, community college god that I respect immensely.”

North Lake and Cedar Valley were scheduled to open in the fall of the following year and that decision had repercussions in some of the early staffing decisions. Outside applicants complained about a closed system which was more perception than reality. As the
district opened new campuses, current employees were given opportunities to transfer to the new campuses, sometimes in their current position and sometimes into a new career opportunity. That left openings at the old campuses and there were plenty of new positions remaining open at the new campuses. It allowed many opportunities for advancement within the district while still providing ample openings for the many educational professionals interested in joining the ranks of a highly respected college district.43

A line drawn from the proposed Cedar Valley campus and the North Lake campus cut diagonally across Dallas County, and it was the same with Eastfield and Mountain View, which opened simultaneously seven years earlier. Cedar Valley was built on 353 acres in a rural section of Lancaster in south Dallas County. The main buildings nestle around a two-level, landscaped stone courtyard. The whole campus backs on to a large pond. In keeping with selecting curriculum for each college that responded to community and business needs, an additional auto mechanics program was placed at Cedar Valley. The surrounding small towns were rooted in a history of farms and ranches leading to the establishment of a veterinary technician program there. The facilities are a distance from the main campus. They include a full veterinary clinic and housing for both large and small animals with a corral for horses and cattle. The area was not heavily populated at the time, but this college district was being built for the future. Since there was a large pond (or very small lake, depending on who was giving the description) on one side of the campus, parking was restricted to the other side with a road and a circular drive separating it from the main campus. The gymnasium was built as a separate building on the southwest side of the campus with parking on the west side of that building. It was not as commuter friendly as the previous campus layouts. It was, however, like all of the campuses, beautiful. The future that had been planned for arrived in the late eighties with the creation of Joe Pool Lake and new housing developments in nearby Cedar Hill and DeSoto.

North Lake College was built on 276 acres in Irving on the west side of Dallas County. The multi-leveled buildings flowed like a
single structure and were staggered along the side of a hill. Parking was placed on two sides of the campus. One lot sits at the top of the hill at the main street entrance with a long downhill hike to the buildings. The other lot rests in a small valley with a long hike up to the buildings. The campus proper was built with covered walkways and halls connecting most of the buildings with stairs and ramps. The structure from the backside is reminiscent of an ancient Mayan dwelling.

There was a true focus on architectural solutions to educational concerns and a desire that form and structure represent the intended function. North Lake, and later Brookhaven, was built with open laboratories and spaces to facilitate self-paced learning. This new instructional approach was supported by flex-entry scheduling and fast-tracked courses. The concept was new and not sufficiently tested, but Priest’s dedication to innovation was paramount above tried and true comfortable methods. He believed that if one was not making mistakes, they were not trying enough new things.

Cedar Valley and North Lake both opened in the summer of 1977. The following year, the final Dallas County Community College opened in Farmers Branch in far northeast Dallas County. Like North Lake, Brookhaven was built with open spaces for self-paced instruction. An additional auto mechanics program was established at Brookhaven, and that campus was to offer nursing courses in conjunction with El Centro. By the mid-seventies, the number of working mothers had created a surge in the child care business. A program in child development was set-up at Brookhaven with a stand alone fully operational Child Development Center complete with a fenced-in play area. The center was to be used as a lab school for Brookhaven students and was open to the public. The same program had been established at Eastfield and both programs garnered such excellent reputations among the parents in each community that waiting lists were soon necessary for enrollment. The warning to young women who worked in the district was as soon as they knew they were pregnant, they needed to get on the waiting list. The quality of the child care there
continues, causing the length of the waiting lists to grow at both colleges.\textsuperscript{46}

Another similarity Brookhaven had to North Lake, was the multi-levels built along the rolling terrain. The buildings are separated by several natural courtyards with trees, foliage, and fountains. The roofs angled to a pitch on one side of each building and were covered in copper and were quite visible from the nearby freeway. Another very visible structure on the Brookhaven campus was to be the one-hundred-and-twenty-foot tall windmill in the center courtyard. This was the last and greatest attempt at blending practicality, art and image marketing. In an article in the \textit{Dallas Morning News} in December of 1976 announcing the plans for the mega-structure, Priest was quoted, “If we pull this thing off, it will certainly be an attraction.”\textsuperscript{47} At that time, Priest did not realize the size of that “if.”

The design of the windmill was a center pole suspended twelve feet from the ground by steel pipes and cables crisscrossed to give the illusion of suspension in space. It was to have eight blades and be fully operational. The primary reason for building a windmill on a college campus was to give Brookhaven College a symbol that linked the future and the past. The past was the agrarian heritage of Farmers Branch.\textsuperscript{48} The idea came from the architectural firm of Pratt, Box, and Henderson.\textsuperscript{49} An afterthought was the practical application of the windmill to provide water to the shower facilities serving the gym and to power the fountains in the courtyards.\textsuperscript{50} It was thought there was even potential use by physics students for experimentation. The design was based on a smaller German model.\textsuperscript{51}

Priest recalled that the construction of the windmill was a bold move and at the time its size or artistic value were not questioned. The main risk was justification of the projected cost of $170,000, which was three-fourths of one percent of the total construction cost of the campus.\textsuperscript{52} As problems began to arise in the construction of the windmill, so did the cost. First, the engineers disagreed about the soundness of replicating a thirty-foot piece of art into a 120 foot functional windmill. Then came the sequential calamities that
befell the blades which had been made in Germany, shipped to the United States, and then trucked to Dallas. The first set of blades was lost when the truck transporting them from Houston had a wreck. Some months later, when the truck carrying the second set of blades arrived safely and the doors to the truck were opened, the blades had been damaged in transport. The bands used to secure the blades during the long trip had cut into the resin-like material and left multiple gouges along the edges of each blade. At that point, everyone felt it was time to quit and find an alternative.\textsuperscript{53}

Some quasi blades were put in place, but when they turned, the vibration posed safety concerns. Those blades were removed.\textsuperscript{54}

When Patsy Fulton came to Brookhaven College as the new president in 1984, the first thing waiting for her attention was a letter from the mayor of Farmers Branch. The letter explained that special permission had been given to the district to erect the windmill because it exceeded the city’s height restrictions. That permission was predicated on the promise that the windmill would be a working generator. The main point of the letter according to Fulton was “to get it working or get it down.”\textsuperscript{55}

In researching the issue, Fulton could not find an engineering firm that would declare the windmill safe or capable of generating any significant amount of electricity. Fulton notified the chancellor, R. Jan LeCroy, who told her it was her decision. Fulton then began the process for removal of the windmill. The campus community expressed mixed feelings. Some were glad to see the intimidating structure go, and others protested the removal of a piece of art. The engineering firm that disassembled it warned that it was spring-loaded and they were unsure of what might occur in taking it down. The deconstruction was scheduled for spring break of 1985 and took place without incident.\textsuperscript{56} Fulton recalled that just a few weeks after the removal, she was walking behind several older women who seemed to be touring the campus. She heard one talking about the massive piece of art that was in one of the courtyards and surely they would find it if they just kept walking. Fulton said she momentarily felt a flush of guilt.
The Brookhaven College windmill, in retrospect, was a mistake with an unknown total cost to the district. It was as though no one wanted to add up the actual expenditures associated with the windmill project from concept to removal. In the planning stages, engineers and architects had advised it was an exciting and history-making undertaking. Based on the recommendations of the architects, Priest secured the approval of the board.

The structure was still in place at the time of Priest’s retirement. A windmill is still used as the Brookhaven logo and is part of the campus culture. Everyone who worked at Brookhaven anytime between 1978 and 1985 seems to have a windmill story. The windmill will always be part of the college’s legends and myths. Memories often embellish a good story.

In 1978, with the last college opened, the growth and innovation did not stop. Enrollments in telecourses had grown to over ten-thousand per academic year. Eighteen courses had been produced and were being sought after by other colleges and even business and industry. That year, Roger Pool became the first telecourse supervisor to have instructional television as his sole responsibility, and he reported to the vice-chancellor of academic affairs, R. Jan LeCroy. That same year a district-wide task force recommended changing the name of Instructional Television to the Center for Telecommunications. Priest’s speculation that there was much value in pre-produced quality courses televised for student convenience had proven to be right on the mark.

He was also right on the mark in his support of marketing as an essential element of a successful college district. Among some gasps and clucking of tongues over wasted time and money, Priest approved and funded a marketing workshop for all the district’s administrators. It was organized by the District Public Information Office. At the event, then national marketing expert Phil Kotler and his colleagues Dennis Johnson and Ernie Leach talked about academic programs in terms of “cash cows” and “dead dogs.” They explained that one component of program evaluation needed to be profitability. They told the somewhat skeptical audience that colleges needed to do statistical research to determine which
academic programs were drawing students and which were not. The statistical approach of the second part of the analysis began to convince some of its validity. The analysis would include a viability study of the program to judge whether increased marketing would help to increase enrollment or whether the program should be phased out. The District Public Information Director, Claudia Robinson, said that her counterparts in community colleges across the country were astounded that Priest would take such a bold step. Most college presidents and chancellors were reluctant to even buy advertising.\(^{60}\)

The Dallas County Community College District was the first in the country to have an insert in the prominent high school magazine, *Campus Voice*. Even Priest was reluctant at first, but he always was willing to listen and consider good data. With the presentation of additional facts, Priest gave his support for the insert which proved to be profitable.\(^{61}\)

Robinson described Priest as “masterful, intelligent, visionary, and sustaining”\(^{62}\) in his utilization of marketing. He was always ready to take the risk of being first. In 1978, he hired Peat, Marwick, and Mitchell to conduct a marketing audit of what the district was doing and should be doing. That audit recommended an image and awareness survey of the DCCCD’s service area. Priest then hired MARC, a research company, to conduct that survey in 1979. Based on those results the public information staff created the 1980 advertising campaign, “Real Colleges. Real Careers. Really close to home.” The survey had revealed a prevailing public opinion that community colleges were not colleges, but a bridge between high school and college. The campaign aimed to confront the perception head on in order to change it.\(^{63}\)

Again in 1978, the DCCCD’s seven colleges were the first community colleges to use a mixed media campaign that tied print advertising to radio commercials. At that time, other colleges were relying on public service announcements and a few were running newspaper advertisements.\(^{64}\) Public service announcements were free, but were aired at times chosen by the radio station and vied for time with more notable causes like medical research fund
raising. That same year the DCCCD hosted the regional National Council for Community Relations Conference, but only twelve public information professionals attended.\textsuperscript{65} That was a numerical representation of the lack of value placed on that function by most community colleges. With the DCCCD leading the way, by 1981 well over fifty public information officers from Texas colleges attended the regional conference.\textsuperscript{66}

Priest appreciated the value of marketing and the power of the media whether that information was an unsolicited article or a paid advertisement. The only negative experience he had with the Dallas media was with \textit{D Magazine}. In 1980, Bill Bancroft conducted a thorough review of the district with multiple interviews. Most had a sense he was looking for “dirt.”\textsuperscript{67} The article took the tone of investigative reporting. But there was nothing scathing. The worst Bancroft could find were the early days of private board meetings before the public official meetings. There were a few people who complained that Priest was not a proponent of participatory management, but there were more who praised Priest for his open, honest, and fair approach to management. The article also cited a 1980 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation team who criticized the district for having too many faculty who had earned their degrees from Texas Colleges. Approximately eighty to eighty-five percent of the faculty had degrees from Texas colleges. The article also criticized the DCCCD for lacking in diversity among its administrators and faculty members.\textsuperscript{68} At that time, there were several African-Americans and Latinos working as college and district level administrators and there were two female college presidents, one of whom was African-American. The criticisms were true and noted, but neither had escalated into an internal or external controversy; nor were they unique to the DCCCD. These were issues common to growing community colleges in metropolitan areas in the late 1970s and early 1980s.\textsuperscript{69}

In order to gather adequate information for the article, Bancroft spent several weeks in the district interviewing people. According to Priest, Bancroft dogged him relentlessly. A couple of days after the magazine issue with the DCCCD article hit the stands, Priest
went to a Cowboys football game to relax. It was the beginning of the first quarter when Priest spotted Bancroft in the stands with ticket in hand searching for his seat. Bancroft looked at the rows carefully as he came closer and closer to Priest. Like an inescapable Moirai, Bancroft located his seat; the number placed him right beside Priest. Priest said it almost ruined the game.